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THE CHILDREN OF THE CITY:
WHAT CAN WE DO FOR THEM?

BY

JAMES B. RUSSELL, M.D., LL.D.



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THE CHILDREN OF THE CITY:

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR THEM?

By JAMES B. RUSSELL, M.D., LL.D.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—It is now more than a century since a distinguished citizen of this city wrote a book entitled, "Sketches of the History of Man," in which there is a chapter, "A Great City considered in Physical, Moral, and Political Views." He began the chapter with this sentence:—"In all ages an opinion has been prevalent, that a great city is a great evil; and that a capital may be too great for the state, as a head may be for the body." The latter part of this sentence suggests that probably "political" more than either "physical" or "moral views" were at the bottom of the alarm and anxiety inspired into the hearts of kings by the growth of cities. Despotism naturally must regard it with jealousy. Cities have in all ages been the birth-places of movements in favour of popular rights and nurseries of political freedom. Still the physical necessities begotten by the aggregation of men have always formed the chief element in the difficulties of their government. The cry for bread was heard as often as the strains of the *Marseillaise*, in the opening scenes of the French Revolution.

In the case of Paris and of London, attempts were made, at a very early date, by the sovereigns of France and England, to check their growth by direct prohibition. I cannot open up the main purpose of my lecture better than by giving you the reasons assigned for this mistaken and futile endeavour. I need not tell you that Paris and London paid as little heed to those imperial edicts as the advancing waves to the behests of Canute. But the most important of the features of city life which troubled the minds of kings still exist, and nowhere more strongly marked and clamant for reform than in this country and in our day. Now the

responsibility has passed with political power from the throne to the people. The difficulties and national dangers inherent in the physical circumstances of cities cannot be better expressed than they were in the language of kings centuries ago, but the centuries have passed and the difficulties and dangers remain. It rests with the sovereign people, in the first place, to grasp as clearly, but in the next place to attempt with more success to solve the problem. The object of my humble endeavour to-night is to help you to the accomplishment of both objects.

The attempt to limit the growth of Paris by prohibiting the erection of new buildings beyond certain bounds was begun in 1549, and renewed from time to time down to 1672, when Louis XIV. justified his edict by the following reasons :—“(1.) That by enlarging the city, the air would be rendered unwholesome. (2.) That cleaning the streets would prove a great additional labour. (3.) That adding to the number of inhabitants would raise the price of provisions, of labour, and of manufactures. (4.) That ground would be covered with buildings instead of corn, which might hazard a scarcity. (5.) *That the country would be depopulated by the desire that people have to resort to the capital.* (6.) That the difficulty of governing such numbers would be an encouragement to robbery and murder.”

Queen Elizabeth prefaced her proclamation issued in 1602, prohibiting the erection of new buildings within three miles of London, with the following preamble :—“That foreseeing the great and manifold inconveniences and mischiefs which daily grow, and are likely to increase, in the city and suburbs of London, by confluence of people to inhabit the same ; not only by reason that such multitudes can hardly be governed, to serve God and obey Her Majesty, without constituting an addition of new officers, and enlarging their authority ; but also can hardly be provided of food and other necessaries at a reasonable price ; and finally, that as such multitudes of people, many of them poor, who must live by begging or worse means, *are heaped up together, and in a sort smothered with many children and servants in one house or small tenement ;* it must needs follow, if any plague or other universal sickness come among them, that it would presently spread through the whole city and confines, and also into all parts of the realm.”

Such were the dangers and disadvantages of large cities as they appeared to the rulers of those distant centuries. Some of them, and notably those of government and food supply, have in the interval been fairly met or even overcome by improved local administration and the repeal of the corn-laws. The standard of health of cities has also been enormously advanced, but it is still true that the rural districts are being depopulated to maintain the towns, that the inhabitants of towns are, in the words of Queen Elizabeth, "heaped up together, and in a sort smothered with many children" in small tenements, and that towns are, though much improved, "unwholesome" as compared with the rural districts from which their active, reproductive population is drafted.

Let me now try to put before you as concisely and simply as may be some information as to the growth of towns in Great Britain, as to the manner of this growth and the vital characteristics of a town as compared with a country population. In doing so I shall state nothing which is not capable of proof by actual statistics, but remembering how difficult it is to make figures popular, I shall use them as sparingly as possible.

In this country, Government, to use a commercial phrase, takes stock every ten years. In England the whole country is divided into Sanitary Districts, which are classified as Urban or Rural according as, from the density of the inhabitants, they require more or less stringent sanitary provisions. In 1861 it was found that 63 per cent. of the entire population of England lived under Urban conditions, in 1871 this proportion had risen to 66 per cent., and in 1881 to 68 per cent. In other words "in 1861 there were 172 dwellers in towns to 100 dwellers in rural districts; but in 1871 the number had risen to 192, and in 1881 had reached 212." The growth of London has been so extraordinary, we may say portentous, that it deserves a special reference. In 1801 it was found that out of every 100 of the entire population of England eleven were inhabitants of London, and this proportion has advanced steadily with every census until in 1881 it had reached fifteen.

In Scotland we have no such sub-division of the country into districts on the basis of their sanitary requirements; but the Registrar-General classifies the population according as they live

in principal, large or small towns, or in mainland-rural or insular-rural districts. This will equally well serve our purpose. In 1861 we find that 61 per cent. of the entire population of Scotland lived in towns; in 1871 the proportion had risen to 65 per cent., and in 1881 to 69 per cent. You will observe that the absorption of the rural population into towns is advancing more rapidly in Scotland than in England; and the fact assumes more importance than is at first apparent, when we remark that it is into the eight principal towns that the population is flowing. While the proportion of the people found at each census in the smaller towns and villages was falling off, the proportion found in the chief towns was rising from 29 per cent. in 1861 to 32 per cent. in 1871, and 38 per cent. in 1881. Glasgow is devouring the population of Scotland even more rapidly than London that of England. At the census of 1871 we find in Glasgow and its suburbs no less than 17 per cent. of the inhabitants of all Scotland, and in 1881 this proportion had risen to 18 per cent.

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION OF SCOTLAND IN TOWN AND RURAL DISTRICTS.



(1) *Principal*, (2) *Large*, (3) *Small*, Towns. (4) *Rural Districts*.

If we look more closely at a town as compared with a rural population, we discover various characteristic features which it is of interest and importance for us to note. There is always in towns a much greater proportion of adults of both sexes, persons at the prime of life. The marriageable females are greatly in excess of the males of the same age. As a natural consequence, early marriages are much more frequent in the towns than in the rural districts, the birth rate is higher, and the proportion of children under five years of age is in excess. But between five and fifteen years of age the proportion is reversed. Though the

town population is more productive, it is less conservative of child-life than the rural population. Another equally sinister characteristic of a town population is that, while above forty-five in country districts, the proportion of persons still living in the married state is maintained, even to extreme old age ; in the towns it falls off in comparison, and is replaced by a large excess of widows and widowers.

If we enquire where towns-people were born, we discover that a very large number, amounting in the larger towns to one-half, are not natives of the town. They hail from agricultural districts and villages. Their speech shows every variety of provincial dialect. In manufacturing towns, and among the unskilled labourers everywhere, we recognize a strong Irish element. If we single out the adults, the persons who are engaged in the workshops, factories, warehouses, who are bustling about the streets in the full vigour of life, we find that a very small proportion, perhaps a third only, belongs to the town, while among the children and the adolescents the relation is reversed, a third being strangers, which still, however, indicates a large admixture of outlandish blood.

Such is a general statement of the comparative composition of town and a country population, if we contrast them at any one period of time. These differences are the final outcome of all the vital movements which are progressing from day to day and from year to year—migrations of families and individuals, guided by every variety of motive, from town to country and from country to town, over the face of the land, and of the balance of births and deaths within the towns and rural districts. It will both interest you, and expose more clearly to your apprehension the nature and extent of those vital movements, if we take a rapid glance over broad Scotland in the interval of ten years, between 1871 and 1881, and endeavour to illustrate the process which throughout the kingdom is resulting in the gradual absorption of the population within the limits of towns.

There are only two ways of exit from the ranks of the inhabitants of a district, whether it be urban or rural—by death or by *e*-migration. There are only two ways of entrance—by birth or by *im*-migration. If, therefore, we find that the population living within any fixed boundary has *increased* by more than

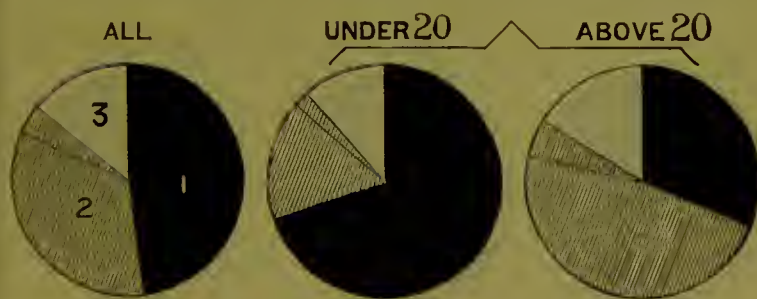
the surplus of births over deaths, or in spite of an excess of deaths over births, then there must have been *im*-migration within that boundary from the outside. If, on the other hand, we find that the population has *diminished* by more than the excess of deaths over births, or in spite of a surplus of births, then there must have been *e*-migration outside the boundary from within. The universal experience is, that towns are growing in excess of their surplus births, and that rural districts are diminishing in spite of an enormous surplus of births. Therefore, we are shut up to the conclusion that there is a continual migration from the latter to the former. Take further into consideration this fact—that both the death-rate and the birth-rate of towns are much higher than the death-rate and birth-rate of the rural districts, and I ask you, is it pronouncing a harsh judgment upon the towns to say that they devour their own children and fill their empty places with the children of the rural districts?

But I am departing from my proposed illustration from the case of Scotland. I shall take the average results of the ten years, 1871 to 1881. The eight *principal towns*, all having above 25,000 inhabitants, had an annual excess of births over deaths of 13,340, but they increased by 21,760 souls every year, so that they absorbed every year 8420 *im*-migrants. Their average birth-rate was 33 and their death-rate 23 per 1000 inhabitants. The *large towns*, all having from 10,000 to 25,000 inhabitants, had an annual excess of births over deaths of 5560, but they increased by 6106 souls every year, so that they absorbed every year 546 *im*-migrants. Their average birth-rate was 42 and their death-rate $26\frac{1}{2}$ per 1000 inhabitants. The *small towns*, all having from 2000 to 10,000 inhabitants, had an annual excess of births over deaths of 12,174, but they only increased by 9384 souls, so that they sent out an annual surplus of 2790 persons. Their average birth-rate was $32\frac{1}{2}$, and their death-rate only 18 per 1000 inhabitants. The *rural districts* had an annual excess of births over deaths of no less than 15,815, but they only increased by 305 souls, so that they sent out a surplus population of 15,510 persons every year. Their average birth-rate was 32 and their death-rate less than 18 per 1000 inhabitants.

Although these figures seem very simple, they, in reality,

represent the final result of very complex social movements, which, if followed out, would lead us into nothing less than a statistical analysis of the population of the habitable globe, including even the Scotchman, who is said to be sitting on the top of the North Pole ! When we strike the balance of births and deaths over all Scotland, and compare the absolute increase of the population of all Scotland in those ten years, we find that over 23,000 persons must have left the country altogether ; joined the great army of Scotch invaders of England, or emigrated to the Colonies or elsewhere. Then we have also to remember the steady influx from Ireland. Nor are the movements between town and country all one way. There are counter-currents from the town to the country, which become specially active in times of commercial depression. But we need not complicate our thoughts with these phenomena. They are all subordinate to the general law, which is the transference of an increasing proportion of the whole population, from the conditions of life in the country to the vastly different conditions of life in the town. I wish you to have a clear understanding of the final result of all this interchange of people, of birth and death and migration, upon what may be called the statical condition of a town. This gives us the practical result, which will form the text of the remainder of my

PROPORTION OF NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS IN EDINBURGH—1881.



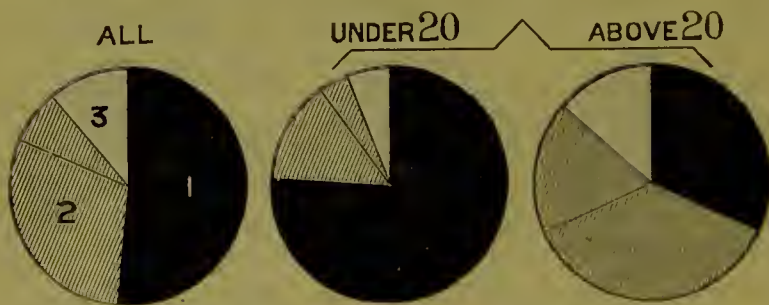
- (1) *Natives.* (2) *Rural Districts, the Irish element indicated by small segment.*
 (3) *Born in seven towns and elsewhere.*

ecture ; and, for this purpose, if I may venture to trouble you with a few more figures, we may take Edinburgh and Glasgow. What was the composition as to birth-place of the inhabitants of

those cities as they were in 1881, after all the complex movements of the past centuries had passed over them ?

The growth of Edinburgh during the ten years preceding last census was supplemented by an annual draft from external sources of 578 persons, over and above her own birth-product. In 1881, out of every 100 of her inhabitants, only 48 were natives ; 34 had been born in the counties of Scotland, exclusive of the seven principal towns ; 7 had migrated from their birth-place in those towns ; 5 had come from across the Border ; and only 4 were of Irish origin ; leaving a balance of 2 contributed from outlandish sources. If we divide the inhabitants of Edinburgh into two classes, one consisting of persons under twenty years of age, and the other of persons aged twenty years and upwards, and then contrast the birth origin of these two classes, we get the following interesting and instructive result. We shall call the younger class the *adolescents* and the older the *adults*. Of the adolescents 71 out of every 100 were natives of Edinburgh, of the adults only 31 ; of the adolescents only 16 hailed from the counties of Scotland outside the seven principal towns, of the adults 48 ; of the adolescents 6 had migrated from those towns, 4 were of English origin, and only 1 of Irish, as compared with 8, 6, and 5 respectively among the adults, leaving in each case a balance of 2 derived from outlandish sources.

PROPORTION OF NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS IN GLASGOW—1881.



- (1) Natives. (2) Rural Districts, the Irish element indicated by small segment.
(3) Born in seven towns and elsewhere.

In the case of Glasgow it is necessary to include the suburbs to get a true measure of the indebtedness of the entire community to external sources for the increase of its population. We then

find that her own birth-product was supplemented by an annual draft of 2340 persons. The materials for an analysis of the inhabitants of Glasgow and suburbs as to their place of birth are not accessible to me. I must therefore take the artificial Glasgow of the Registrar-General. In 1881, out of every 100 of the population of this "Glasgow," only 51 were natives, 26 came from the counties of Scotland outside the seven principal towns, 13 were natives of Ireland, 5 came from the other chief towns, 3 were of southern origin, leaving 1 to represent the foreign element. As in the case of Edinburgh, if we separate the inhabitants of "Glasgow" into "adolescents" and "adults," we find that out of every 100 of each class among the adolescents there were 76 Glasgownians, among the adults only 31; among the adolescents only 14 hailed from the Scotch counties, exclusive of the principal towns, among the adults 37; among the adolescents only 4 were of Irish origin, among the adults 20; while of the former class 3 were natives of the chief towns, and 2 were from over the Border, as compared with 7 and 4 respectively of the latter class, leaving in each case a balance of 1 foreigner to complete the 100.

These are fair samples of the results of the family management of towns. If we turn up their register of births from year to year, we find them overflowing; but when we call upon them at the census we find that half of the family are changelings. In that chapter of his quoted at the outset of this lecture, Lord Kames remarks, contemplating the comparatively modest requirements of London a century ago:—"The annual supply amounts probably to a greater number than were needed annually for recruiting our armies and navies in the late war with France. If so, London is a greater enemy to population than a bloody war would be, supposing it even to be perpetual. What an enormous tax is Great Britain thus subjected to for supporting her capital! The rearing and educating yearly for London 7000 or 8000 persons requires an immense sum." In 1865 Dr Morgan, in a paper on "The Deterioration of Race in Large Cities," estimated that in order to maintain the growth of London "the whole available resources of a vast country nursery, peopled by nearly two millions, must be called into requisition."

Observe I do not find fault with the towns for attracting

"young rusticity," or young rusticity for being attracted. There are natural and insuperable limits to the number of people who can live upon the soil which they cultivate. In all ages a time has come sooner or later when, those limits having been reached, the surplus population has, in the search for subsistence, forced its way into "fresh fields and pastures new." The boy,

"When first he leaves his father's field,
And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn,
And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men ;"

this boy is but a drop in the great tide of men, which flows peacefully to many shores under the same impulse which hurled the surplus hordes of the crowded north in a raging sea down upon the Roman Empire and overwhelmed it. I do not complain of the continued operation of this natural law. It is futile to oppose it, as those sovereigns tried to do by edicts and ordinances. What I do protest against as a great national injury is that the towns do not rear their own children into healthy and vigorous citizens, competent to supply some larger proportion of their wants. They receive those selected lives, reared by the parental care of rural districts, aided by favouring physical conditions, and they subject them to physical conditions which are fatal to child-life, and slowly sap the vigorous rustic constitutions of the parents. Look at those circles exhibiting at each successive census the proportions of the whole population of Scotland living under the conditions of town and country life, where black in three shades represents the towns in their three grades of size, and green stands appropriately for the country.* Observe how the black is steadily spreading and the green retiring before the inroads of the black. Remember that the birth-rate is much higher in the towns than in the rural districts, and that consequently the proportion of the total birth-crop of the nation, which is exposed to the adverse influences of towns, is larger than the black represents, and the proportion springing up under the benign conditions of rural districts less than the green repre-

* See page 84, where the diagram referred to is reproduced, with shading instead of colouring.

ents. Now endeavour to estimate the gravity of this ever-advancing revolution in the vital constitution of the nation by its results on child-life. Speaking of Scotland as represented in those diagrams, as the black extends you have a condition of things extending, in which, of every 1000 children born, 137 die before they have reached their first birth-day. As the green diminishes, you have a condition of things diminishing, under which only 90 are thus prematurely cut off. But the deepest shade of black, the largest towns, is steadily absorbing a larger proportion of the dark area, and this means the extension of conditions under which 150 out of every 1000 children born perish within a year of birth. Glasgow is extending most rapidly of all, and she makes away with 153 per 1000 of her children before she has had them a year in her fatal arms. Scotland is but a small item in the United Kingdom. Her whole population is less than that of London, and only constitutes between one-ninth and one-tenth of the United Kingdom. A much larger proportion of the English than of the Scotch people live in large towns, and the large towns of England are much more deadly to child-life than those of Scotland. Within a year of birth they destroy on an average 185 of every 1000 born. If we take individual towns, the sacrifice is still more dreadful. For example, in Liverpool it is 219 out of every 1000 born, and in Leicester it sometimes rises as high as 245, that is to say, one out of every four of the unhappy babies of Leicester is buried within twelve months of its birth.

You know that in war when you read that so many were killed, you always read further that so many were wounded. You do not need to be told that of the wounded many more will die, and that the majority of those who ultimately survive will be more or less maimed and crippled, and a large proportion will be invalided and found unfit for further service. So it is with those troops of children. If 137, or 153, or 185, or 245, in four several troops of 1000 each, have died within one year of their entrance upon the campaign of life, then a proportion keeping pace with the rising fatality will be wounded. Of these many more will die as the campaign progresses, and the survivors will be invalided and found unfit for further service. Still further, if only 90 have died in another troop, you need not be told that the

physique of those who survive must on the whole be more vigorous and serviceable than the physique of the survivors of those other thousands. I reason thus to lead you to the conviction, without appealing to the comparative statistics of stature, rate of growth, weight, chest-girth, and all those facts of anthropometry or man-measurement, that it cannot but be that the physique of town born and bred men and women is inferior to that of men and women born and bred in the country. This being admitted, if the proportion of all the children of a nation who are town born is increasing from year to year, then the physique of the whole country must be deteriorating in quality. The rural districts furnish the only resistance to our progress down the inclined plane, and just as the towns absorb the inhabitants of the rural districts, this resistance will become less, and the national descent more rapid.

Now, you know what I mean by "The Children of the City," and you can estimate the importance of my question:—"What can we do for them?"

I must endeavour to work out for my remarks some limiting lines derived from the characteristics of the child as contrasted with the man, otherwise I shall be led into a general disquisition upon health and the whole round of sanitation. I confine myself mainly to the physical aspects of childhood. The child has to grow the machine which as an adult it will use. In the first year of life, the child adds more to its bulk than in any subsequent year. It trebles its weight, and adds $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches or 41 per cent. to its height. In the second year it gains nearly 4 inches more, and so by gradually diminishing increments attains "the full stature of the perfect man." It follows from these facts that every element of health which influences the adult tells much more upon the child either for good or ill. The adult is in a position of stability, and has mainly to strive to keep what he has got, to resist deterioration. The child has not merely to resist but to store up. It must progress or it will die. The child is physically, even more than morally, the father of the man. It may change morally, but it cannot get rid of rickety bones, or impaired organs, or a tainted constitution. If it gets insufficient or improper food to eat, foul air to breathe, impure water to drink; if it is cramped in space and cradled in dirt, it

cannot help itself. It must succumb or grow up through sickly and unhappy adolescence into weak and stunted manhood. This helplessness is one of the pathetic features of childhood, which should touch the heart of society on its behalf. No moral blame attaches to it for the circumstances and surroundings into which it is born. The child's sufferings are vicarious—if for sins and shortcomings, they are not its own. The element of discipline which enters so largely into the physical conditions of the adult life, and makes the thoughtful philanthropist hesitate in his work of relief and amelioration, has no place in our dealings with childhood. As regards pure air, pure water, cleanliness in all its details, nothing more need be said than that the child enjoys the largest share of the blessings which descend upon the community which is well cared for in these respects. The general sanitary improvement of our towns tells first and chiefly upon the children. So also with everything affecting the morals of the adult population. Vice and drunkenness strike at the child through the physical deterioration of the home, and the destruction of that self-denying and scrupulously conscientious discharge of parental responsibility upon which the weak and helpless child is so utterly dependent. The city quickens every element, the bad as well as the good, in human nature. So if we find there more culture, more moral earnestness and elevation, more intense religious life, more philanthropy, more political fervour than in the country, we also find there more vice, more crime, more self-indulgence, more modern heathenism, more political and social quackery. At the root of a high infantile death-rate, there are always elements of moral delinquency in the parents, and drunkenness is unquestionably the most potent for evil of all the moral factors. It devours the material necessities of child-life by diverting the money which should provide food, clothing, education, air-space in the house, to the tills of the publican. It transforms the kindly, self-denying father into a selfish, heartless brute. It impairs the constitution of the child before it has entered the world. It daints the mother's milk after the child is born, and deprives it of all the tender nurture which instinct secures for the offspring of even the inferior animals. This is all I intend to say of the morals of this complicated question of child-life in cities. I feel bound to say so much simply to show that I am alive to their

existence and importance. It is a favourite method of landlords and others, whose material interests are affected by the arguments of those who advocate the improvement of the physical conditions of life in cities, to divert attention from one of the many causes at work which happens specially to touch their pockets, to another cause which somehow or other always has this feature to commend it—that it shifts the burden from their shoulders. It is also a failing of one-eyed though zealous social reformers to magnify their particular fad, and so aid and abet, it may be unwittingly, the numerous class of interested obstructives. They join heartily in any cry of “lo ! here,” “lo ! there,” as the most likely way to secure that nothing at all will be done, and so their interest will be conserved.

Let us assume, then, that a city child has parents who are sober, industrious, honestly desirous to do their best in the circumstances in which they are placed, to rear it. Let us also assume that it has been born in a city which has a good water-supply, which is well-drained and sewered, and, on the whole, as cities now-a-days are, fairly well looked after as to general sanitation. If I were asked to express in one word what it is that the city child still lacks which the country child possesses, and what it is that the child as a child, wherever it may live, most requires, I should reply, “Space,” or the Anglo-Saxon equivalent, “Room.” So soon as men cease to use that portion of the surface of the earth on which they reside for the production of their food, they are relieved from the necessity of distributing themselves over the surface. Instead of farms and crofts and cottars’ houses, with intervening fields and roads, we have villages, towns, and cities with only so much bare space left in them as is necessary for inter-communication by narrow lanes and streets. The relation of space to people is regulated not by agricultural necessities, but by competition for living and working-room upon it. The larger the city the hotter grows this competition. It is hottest in the heart of it, where house is piled upon house, and tenement crushed in upon tenement, and ever the less becomes the proportion of space per inhabitant, and the scantier the access of the air and the sunlight. The fields fly further and further away from the advancing Medusa of the city, whose look turns them into stone.

This element of space comprehends all the physical conditions of health so completely that, under the name "density," it is recognised by vital statisticians as the best standard of measurement of those conditions in different districts for comparative purposes. It may be variously expressed. The population divided by the superficial area in acres upon which they live, gives the number of persons per acre—which is 84 in Glasgow, and may be only the twelfth part of a person in a rural district. The opposite calculation gives the fraction of space per person—which is the eighty-fourth part of an acre, or about 58 square yards in Glasgow, and may be 12 acres in a rural district. Another interesting expression of the same facts is got by supposing each man, woman, and child to stand in the middle of his or her own plot. How near would they be to one another? This is called the "proximity," and in Glasgow the distance would be 8 yards, while in the rural district it would be 147. But it is the house-space which is of most importance to the child, and most of all in a city where the space outside the house is so restricted. It does not matter much to the country child whether it resides in a mansion or in a sheiling with a "but and a ben," or even in a "but" without the "ben." Outside there is boundless space. The cottar's wife can carry her baby over the threshold with the certainty of seeing the sun, and giving it a bath of pure air. The cottar's three-year-old can toddle over the grass and fill its hands with daisies, and the school-boy can run and leap for miles. But the town child finds no such compensation outside the one-room house. Therefore this aspect of density is the most serious of all from our present point of view. Again turning to Glasgow for illustration, we find that the average size of the Glasgow house is only between two and three rooms, and that every room is occupied by an average of more than two people. Of every four persons living in Glasgow, one resides in a one-room house. There it is found that the smaller the house, reckoning size by rooms, the more people occupy it in proportion to the cubic air-space within. In large houses, therefore, space is a luxury. It is in excess of the requirements of health. In the small houses, on the other hand, it is pinched and reduced below those requirements. It is like insufficient food or clothing, a manifestation of straitened circumstances, or of thoughtlessly distributed expenditure.

It is necessary for scientific purposes to be able to express the facts of density, so far as measureable, by such figures ; but while I feel that it is not necessary to tell you that there is only one-twelfth part of a person per acre in a rural district to enable you to understand the healthy conditions which there prevail, I am painfully aware that to tell you of the average eighty-four persons per acre in a city makes you little the wiser. Even when I add that one out of every four of these persons lives in a one-room house, there is still something wanted to give you some conception of the disadvantages of child-life in such conditions. Let me try to help you to fill in a few corners of the picture, for I make no reference to the disease, the moral contamination which spring from these conditions, but only to some special uses of space which are indispensable to childhood.

Some of you may have read a clever little book called "Ginx's Baby, his birth, and his other misfortunes," and if so, you cannot have forgot the circumstances of space in which this baby, the twelfth of its name, found itself. "The dimensions of the bed were 4 feet 6 inches by 6 feet. When Ginx, who was a stout navvy, and Mrs Ginx, who was, you may conceive, a matronly woman, were in it, there was little vacant space about them. Yet as they were forced to find resting-places for all the children, it not seldom happened that at least one infant was perilously wedged between the parental bodies ; and latterly they had been so pressed for room in the household that two younglings were nestled at the foot of the bed. . . . The family sleeping-room measured 13 feet 6 inches by 14 feet. Opening out of this was their kitchen and sitting-room ; it was not quite so large as the other. This room contained a press, an old chest of drawers, a wooden box once used for navvy's tools, three chairs, a stool, and some cooking utensils. When, therefore, one little Ginx had curled himself up under a blanket on the box, and three more had slipped beneath a tattered piece of carpet under the table, there still remained five little bodies to be bedded. For them an old straw mattress, limp enough to be rolled up and thrust under the bed, was at night extended on the floor. With this and a patchwork quilt, the five were left to pack themselves together as best they could. So that, if Ginx, in some vision of the night, happened to be angered, and struck out his legs in navvy fashion,

it sometimes came to pass that a couple of children tumbled upon the mass of infantile humanity below."

The only detail of this graphic picture which is not true to nature is that all those twelve children survived. In real life, at least half of them would have been laid to rest in the churchyard, for there is nothing more striking in one's experiences of visiting such localities than the uniform tale of large families and high mortality—ten, twelve, fourteen, or more children, and only two or three alive. Mr Ginx was a labourer, earning 18s. to 20s. per week, and living in London. In Glasgow he would have occupied a one or two apartment house in a back land, up several flights of stairs, at the end of a dark lobby. There young Ginx would lie, his first breath, like every subsequent one, filling his lungs with the foul air of a crowded and not very clean house. By and bye he would get an airing, in the shape of a promenade in the arms of his little sister, through the back court, a sunless pit, full of the smoke of washing-houses and the smells of ashpits. As soon as she got tired or felt anxious for a little independent diversion she would deposit him on the steps of some convenient stair, or on the shivery asphalte. At other times Mrs Ginx would take him out shopping, having first carefully locked the others in, generally on the Saturday nights, in all weathers, and perhaps from certain difficulties in the way of getting Mr Ginx home, returning very late. The nearest place where she could find a sunlit space with trees and grass and some approach to fresh air is a public park a mile or two off, but Mrs Ginx cannot leave the others, and she is unable to carry or pilot them through crowded streets so far, even if she has not lost all notion of the use of such a trouble, which is very likely. The outcome of the whole situation is that baby is scarcely ever out of that stuffy room. When he begins to creep about, he is constantly in the way, and is either put up on the bed to keep him out of the risk of being scalded or burned or trodden upon, or is sent out with his little nurse-maid sister to look at the shop windows, or be planted down in this familiar back court, where he may be seen, like that other child seen by Aurora Leigh on the "uneven pavement" of St Margaret's Court—

"Whose wasted right hand gambled 'gainst his left,
With an old brass button in a blot of sun."

Those restless movements of the tiny hands and feet which are so troublesome in the small house and must be restrained, are the first manifestations of that instinctive craving for exercise which characterizes all young animals. They are essential for the proper development of the body, and ought to be encouraged. As intelligence grows and as the child obtains more and more command over its body, this instinct expands into the desire to play. Then begin for all the tribe of Ginx troubles, which thicken the further they advance into boyhood and girlhood. If you wish to understand the position of play in the physical, mental, and moral development of the child, you must read a little book, admirable alike for its wisdom and gentleness—"What is Play," by Dr Strachan, published in this city some years ago. Play he defines as "All voluntary exercise in the young, prompted by natural inclination and producing pleasure." He points out that the desire to play is an instinct implanted in the child as in other young animals, "to secure in the young the exercise required for development, just as the appetite for food is intended to secure proper nourishment." In short, play is essential for the health and duly proportioned growth of the child. It is that which makes the man and woman, who no longer desire to play, but are impelled by the exigencies of life to maintain by useful work the physique of which the foundations were laid in play.

In this aspect of play consider the position of our city children. They are impelled by a restless, ceaseless instinct, and not by the Devil, as the landlords and the police seem to think. Pent up in common stairs and in back courts, without a bit of space which they can call their own, their play inevitably becomes in great part mischief. What can a poor boy do but pull bricks out of the walls of the ashpit to build houses with, or climb upon its roof and tear the slates off to make traps for the city sparrows? If they fly kites the policeman cuts the string: if they dig holes in the court to play at marbles, the factor denounces them to the police: if they play ball against the wall, the policeman grabs the ball: if they make slides on the pavement, he puts salt upon them: if they try to swim in the river, they are almost poisoned by the sewage, and when they come out it is to find the man in blue waiting for them beside their clothes: if they pitch a wicket on an empty building site, the birl of the well-known whistle stops

the game before they have completed their innings. The girls are no better off. As you feel your way along the dark lobbies, blinded by the light you have just left behind you, you stumble over them playing at houses. As you ascend the stairs you have to pick your way through their assortment of broken dishes and odds and ends with which they are reproducing their meagre experiences of house-keeping and shopping.

A philosophic induction made by Dr Strachan is well illustrated in the city child. He says :—"In all cases the prevailing characteristics of play correspond with the peculiarities of manners, habits, occupations, and pursuits which characterize the adult population." How often do we see the city child playing at being drunk, or at policemen and thieves, or fighting as their elders do. In short, I know of nothing more pitiful among all the pitiful results of want of space upon city life than this compulsory perversion of a natural instinct into unwholesome ways. It has a positive and a negative aspect. In so far as the instinct is gratified it results in the acquisition of destructive habits, and in moral and physical contamination. In so far as it is repressed it robs the child of the proper fruits of a God-given instinct—the development of healthy bodies, predisposed for useful work ; a sprightly, manly disposition and an active mind. As the child passes into the youth, what can we expect from such a childhood but a breed of " loafers " and " muffs " ! When the child becomes the half-timer and the apprentice, and play assumes the higher form of recreation or renewal and restoration of body and mind by the substitution of sport for daily toil, the city affords no more facility. Their poor pence cannot afford the lease of a field for cricket or football. What can a poor lad do but stand at the close mouth, with his hands in his pockets, smoking or chewing tobacco, talking obscenity, and ready for the dram-shop and the singing-saloon ? Need we be surprised that when they become men, they think the best way to enjoy a holiday is to start for a sail or a run by train to some seaside resort or country place, each with a bottle of whiskey in his pocket ; or that the arrival of an " excursion " is looked upon with alarm by the inhabitants of our villas and marine palaces ?

"What can we do for them ?" First, let me say, you can do much for yourselves. Every facility for locomotion—the tram,

the suburban train—makes it less a sacrifice of personal convenience for the toiling fathers to choose a house as far afield as possible. I advise working-men to live as far from the heart of the city as they can, but I wish specially to speak of what can be done by public effort after you have done your best to help yourselves. Here the philanthropist is met by his familiar bewildering difficulty. Life is fleeting. There are human beings *now* undergoing hardships, suffering from abuses. Can nothing be done to ameliorate on the one hand, while on the other the radical cure is being patiently worked out? This question must be put with peculiar urgency in reference to everything which affects the welfare of children. Their childhood is passing rapidly away. Every year it ends for some of them. But there are some things which can be done at once. We can in various ways bring the children to the country, and do some little bits of good work in the town. The larger task of bringing the country in such measure as is possible into the town involves the revolutionizing of the prevailing principles of laying out and building cities, and the carrying out of improvements in the course of years.

In suggesting ways of bettering the physical conditions of the children of the city, I shall trust very much to that quick perception of the practical necessities of the case which a good cause never fails to secure in a Christian community. I believe that the best way to promote the cure of a social disease is to take pains to convince the public that the disease exists, and to exhibit its precise nature, rather than to attempt to elaborate a detailed plan of treatment. There are already many good souls in all large cities who are in various ways doing their best to bring a little of the sunshine and beauty of God's earth into contact with the lives of the children of the city. I shall not, therefore, pretend to exhaust the resources of benevolence.

I first warmly commend a system of "Holiday Colonies," which, originating in Switzerland ten years ago, has since spread over many of the towns of Germany, Austria, Italy, and has reached even Russia. Those desirous of fuller information will find it in a paper contained in the eleventh volume of the "Literature of the London Health Exhibition of 1884." A local committee is formed, and funds are collected during the winter and spring. The head teachers of the primary schools are

requested to furnish lists of the deserving, really poor, weakly but not actually sick children, between seven and fourteen years of age. These are medically examined, and as many selected as the funds admit. They are then assorted, sometimes in large colonies of thirty or forty each under two or three teachers, but more usually in small bands of ten to fifteen under single teachers. Their clothing is supervised by the ladies, and supplemented by gifts where necessary, but only after getting as much out of the parents as possible. Then farm-houses, school-houses, or even small inns are chosen in the open country. The month which constitutes the school holiday is thus spent. Careful observation by weighing and measuring has shown that the improvement in health effected by these outings is not temporary. The selected children continue to gain in height and weight beyond their fellows. Increased quickness of intellect and great moral improvement are also conspicuous. As to the cost, including a honorarium to the teachers in charge, it only amounts to an average of scarcely two shillings per day for each child. I need not remark that anybody who can afford it may engage unostentatiously in this good work, by giving a holiday to one or two city children.

In America, there are in every city numerous organizations under various names, such as the "St John's Guild" and "Tribune Fresh-Air Fund" in New York, "The Poor Children's Excursions" in Boston, "The Children's Country Week" in Philadelphia, all of which take the children out for longer or shorter periods to the country. In many Transatlantic towns, arrangements exist for giving young children sails on sea or lake during those hot months of summer which blast the infant lives of their population like the hot breath of the Sirocco. Tickets for these sails are usually distributed through the Health Department or the Police, and the mothers accompany the children.

I mention also the "National Physical Recreation Society," established last year in London under the Presidency of Mr Herbert Gladstone, "for the promotion of Physical Recreation among the Working Classes." Its scope is very wide, embracing facilities for physical exercise both in winter and summer. This society has started a magazine—"The Gymnasium News," in which you will find an ample explanation of its machinery and method of work. I commend it as deserving of hearty support.

I merely refer to the establishment of "Day-nurseries" for the care of infants whose mothers must work for a livelihood, to Kyrle societies, to the utilization of board-school play-grounds, to the throwing open in summer of private gardens and parks, as has been done by the Inns of Court in London, where, under supervision, children are admitted in the evenings; to the hiring of play-rooms in poor districts, with toys and material for games, where shelter and amusement may be found in the dreary winter. These notes will serve as hints to the philanthropic, anxious for the opportunity of doing an immediate and lasting bit of good in their day and generation. Every large city should have a society such as the "Metropolitan Public Gardens Association," over which Lord Brabazon presides, to promote and systematise this work in the locality.

The second part of my answer to the question:—"What can we do?" refers to the making of cities more like places where children form part of the population, and are intended to be reared. At present they seem to have been laid out by some Board of Bachelors, or Malthusians, or Herods. "It is a pity," says Mr Kellogg, of New York, "that in the administration of great cities the interests of half their population are so little accounted of. They are managed for adults, for trade, for property-holders. Why should provision not be made for the sports of childhood? Let spaces for fresh air be reclaimed by throwing down the walls of abandoned graveyards and legally obnoxious tenement houses; let them be preserved from the rapacity of commerce and landlords; let them be reserved until they exist in every ward of the town. In them should be malls for children's games, over which policemen should keep guard, not to repress the children's sport, but to warn off querulous and sordid age. Let the children know that they are a recognised constituent of civic life. Respect them that they may respect themselves." It is not easy to reconcile this feature of cities, either with our reason or our humanity. Just think of the pains expended by breeders of stock of every description, from fowls to race-horses, upon special arrangements for the young. The city notion is to pack the adults as closely as possible, and then shake the children down into the chinks. There are paddocks for the young horses and court-yards to the dog-kennels, but the children

must run among the feet of the passengers on the pavement or the horses on the street. There is no space they can call their own. They are in the way both inside the house and outside. One cannot but agree with Herbert Spencer when he says :—"Had Gulliver narrated of the Laputans that the men dined with each other in learning how best to rear the offspring of other creatures, and were careless of learning how best to rear their own offspring, he would have paralleled any of the other absurdities he ascribes to them." How is this ? Have we not all been children ? Are our Members of Parliament and Town Councillors some strange order of beings who sprang like Minerva, full-grown, into life, and had no experience of nurseries, or play-grounds, or cricket fields ? It is often argued by the ladies that the unfairness to their sex, which they allege marks many laws passed or tolerated by Parliament, exists because women have no vote, and cannot influence the representation. I am disposed to believe that if women had had a voice in legislation and administration, children would not have been forgotten. But why do the fathers not look to their interests ? Did any of you ever ask a municipal candidate, "Will you support a proposal to provide play-grounds for children in this ward ?" Have you ever heard the smoke question raised on such an occasion ? Do any of your political associations, after scrutinising the votes of your member on the Irish question or Disestablishment, ever think of enquiring why, in Committee on some Police Bill, he voted for the reduction of the free space to be left behind tenements, or of the breadth of new streets ? I am in the habit of carefully scanning reports of the "heckling" of candidates at ward meetings and in Parliamentary elections, and I have found questions on every imaginable and unimaginable subject, but not one touching the health of the people. Yet those questions which I have suggested go to the roots of the improvement of cities as nurseries. Wherever the element of space is involved in any proposal for local or national legislation, support that which will give you the most space about your houses. You will always find the landlords and land-owners and speculative builders on the other side. The opposition does not come from the general body of well-to-do ratepayers who have space enough for themselves and their families. Don't allow your-

selves to be frightened by the cry of increased taxation. Those who have *pro indiviso* pleasure-grounds and pay enormous feuduties for them are quite ready to share with you every expense attendant upon the provision of open spaces for your children. Why should you object to contribute your pence or shillings along with their pounds? You will save it in doctors' bills. The cost of burying one child would pay the tax for years. Many who live in large houses and have private grounds would not do so but for the sake of their families. They believe that the best legacy they can leave to their children is not money saved at the expense of house-room, but money invested in their ruddy cheeks, firmly knit limbs, and sound constitution.

One word of warning I venture to utter as to the situation and use of open spaces for city populations. Speaking of a working-man's wife in New York, the writer I have quoted says : —“ Had she time she might carry the little one to the open squares of the city ; but these are gradually disappearing, and the taxes for public pleasure-grounds and health-giving spaces are consumed upon the vast, distant Park accessible chiefly to those who have leisure or wealth.” My warning is that you working men should remember that for you the most useful open spaces are those which are close to your dwellings. Observe I do not object to those distant parks in themselves, but solely as substitutes for the occasional simple playground in the heart of the city. Both together form a complete provision for your young children whenever they can venture out during a sunny hour, as well as for yourselves on Saturday afternoons and holidays when you can go to the park with your families. I fear corporations have hitherto as a rule spent all their rates for open spaces upon these parks, and have chiefly benefited suburban communities of wealthy people who have congregated around them beyond the area of taxation. I praise and commend for imitation by other cities the wisdom of the Corporation of Edinburgh in not only providing parks, but also clearing and paving small areas here and there in the dense portions of the city. There your youngest children can sprawl about in the sunshine, and your older ones enjoy their games. See to it also that even in the distant pleasure-grounds the flower-beds do not usurp all the space, but that vacant areas are left for cricket and football. There your lads,

who cannot afford to lease fields like the golden youth of the wealthy, will have the same scope for wholesome recreation. Parks should not be places for merely dawdling along looking at flowers or admiring grass through iron railings.

I suppose many of you have read "Oceana, or England and her Colonies," by James Anthony Froude. You will remember how Mr Froude uses the facts regarding the progressive absorption of our home population in large cities, and the physical degeneracy consequent upon city life, upon which I have based this lecture. He makes them the foundation of his eloquent denunciation of a policy of separation from, and advocacy of a corporate union with our colonies. He says:—"It is simply impossible that the English men and women of the future generations can equal or approach the famous race that has overspread the globe, if they are to be bred in towns such as Birmingham and Glasgow now are, and to rear their families under the conditions which now prevail in those places. Morally and physically they must and will decline." In the first and last chapters of this book Mr Froude repeats again and again, with all the vigour and variety of expression of which he is a master, his opinion that our cities can no longer rear men, that our only hope as a nation is in our colonies. "England would pour out among them, year after year, those poor children of hers, now choking in fetid alleys, and relieved of the strain, breathe again fresh air into her own smoke-encrusted lungs." Again he uses a metaphor which, though not true to nature, yet clearly expresses his notion of the function of the colonies in the future life of the nation:—"By and bye, like the spreading branches of the forest tree, they would return the sap which they were gathering into the heart." To avert national extinction, and secure the colonies as the nurseries of the men who are to fight our battles, and preserve our supremacy among the nations, he appeals to the democracy. He says:—"If the colonies are to remain integral parts of Oceana, it will be through the will of the people. To the question, What value are they? the answer is that they enable the British people to increase and multiply." Thus, and thus only, says Mr Froude, England will remain "Queen among the nations, from without invulnerable, and at peace, and at health within."

Ladies and gentlemen, I also appeal to the democraey, but my appeal is to this effect:—Do not abandon our cities to this black future. How can England ever be “Queen among the nations, from without invulnerable, and at peace and at health within,” if the old heart of the nation beats slower from year to year in an island which is being gradually petrified into cities in which children die or grow up into “Dead-sea apes”? By all means incorporate the colonies, but not as healthy limbs to a decaying body. That will not preserve to us our sovereignty. Never will it be truer that the voice of the people is the voice of God than when that voice says—“Let there be light” in those “fetid alleys,” where Mr Froude says, and says truly, “with no sight of a green field, with no knowledge of flowers or forest, the blue heavens themselves dirtied with soot,—amid objects all mean and hideous, with no entertainment but the music hall, no pleasure but in the drink shop,—hundreds of thousands of English children are now growing up into men and women.” Only say the word, and the light will come. Long before the advent of household suffrage Carlyle told you so. Let his words, repeated now, wake you up to a sense of your power. “Every toiling Manchester, its smoke and soot all burned, ought it not, among so many world-wide conquests, to have a hundred acres or so of free greenfield, with trees on it, conquered, for its little children to disport in; for its all-conquering workers to take a breath of twilight air in? *You* would say so! A willing Legislature *could* say so with effect. A willing Legislature could say very many things! And to whatever ‘vested interest,’ or such like, stood up, gain-saying merely, ‘I shall lose profits,’ the willing Legislature would answer, ‘Yes, but my sons and daughters will gain health, and life, and a soul.’”

Presented to the Library
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By the Author

James Maxwell
with his compliments
22nd September 1887

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BELFAST NEWS-LETTER.

Sir—The following appeared in the *Graphic* of the 11th June. We cannot encourage the author of "The Transfer of the Crown and other Poems," by James Maxwell; Belfast: Marcus Ward, to carry out his idea of continuing the subject in several books—at any rate until he has learned the first principles of toleration and prosody, which are possibly difficult to acquire in his neighbourhood. This is a sample of what he believes to be blank verse—

The first of these illustrious heroes
Was Lord Lovelace, distinguished for his taste,
Magnificence, and his audacious love of liberty.

REPLY.

I am not surprised that the writer of the above should desire me to acquire principles of toleration and prosody. For certainly I would require to be very tolerant and prosaic to be pleased with his remarks. The lines referred to are intended for those who have learned the first principles of poesy instead of prosody. There is not a mean nor ill sounding word in them. They are rich in harmony and significance, not only collectively but all the words individually, most of which are infinite in meaning in themselves, but when applied to a person expand the thoughts to the widest extent. That these qualities can exist in that person. They would look better, however, with the following lines linked to them, which complete the paragraph:—

His residence was situated in a lovely valley,
Through the fair confines of which the Thames
Embowered beneath the leafy robes of trees,
That spread their rich embroidery o'er its waves,
Rolls brightly on around the gentle hills
Of Berkshire its silvery volume to the sea,
Refreshing fields and flowers and fragrant groves.

True poetry consists of words of harmonious sound and large significance, formed into sentences of similar quality, and possessing a flow of feeling and a picturesque bearing. Prosody can do nothing to enhance this, although it has often done much to its hindrance, and the deception of those who cannot distinguish between verse and poetry. Regular measure generally gives a elipt affected form of expression rather than a natural gracefulness of speech, besides the monotony of similar sounds and accents through a long poem. With regard to toleration, I must say that poets, like painters, treat their subjects just as they see them under those lights that give the strongest colours and the deepest shadows for the sake of attaining sufficient force and effect to their pictures. And in the reign of the Bloody Assizes, when our King was a pensioner to France and our nation of no influence in Europe, when a woman was burnt to death on a slight accusation, and the State just on the eve of revolution, the light of liberty and toleration had sunk sufficiently low to give all those effects that do not appear in the

cutions over Europe in past ages, which form her strongest characteristics in the poem. I would advise the critic to attain a better perception in both poetry and history, which is possibly difficult for him to acquire before he attempts further reviews.

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complains also of irregularities of measure, referring specially to the first nine lines. I reply that when people learn that language is to be read and spoken, instead of counted, they will see that there is more natural grace of feeling and sound, more beauty of imagery, and a greater grasp of concentrated thought in the following lines than generally appears in modern verse:—

Great God! who reigns supreme above all
thrones;

Creator of the glorious universe;

Whose hand on high hath fixed the spacious
heavens,

Hung like an arch of triumph over all these
worlds;

That shine within the vast ethereal bower sublime;

By Thy Divine command, who reigns above the
spheres,

And hear'st the sound of golden trumpets and
celestial songs

Incessant flow from saints and seraphim around
Thy throne

In holy adoration bowed before Thy Majesty
Divine.

The first line pictures the absolute supremacy of God's reign without any extravagance and without any defect. The second is equally concise, representing Him as the Creator of the universe, no limited universe, but all God's universal creation. The next three must be considered unitedly, as giving a primary, a comparative, and a conclusive picture of the visible heavens, apparently placed by God over all His works. These ideas are unique and perfect; you cannot add to them without superfluity, nor take from them without injury. They differ from ordinary poetry just as the "Otto of roses differs from rose water; the one is the close condensed essence, the other the thin diluted mixture." Almost all the poem will bear similar analysis, and a single line from one of the sonnets will show that the same qualities prevail in the minor poems:—

"Glad spring its covenant of life renews."

The first two words picture all the gladness of spring; the singing of birds which scarcely exists after spring; the hum of insects, the bright sunshine, the gaiety of flowers, and all that makes spring the gladdest time of the year. The other five words presents its life-renewing qualities; the foliage which dies in winter now appears; the seeds spring into herbs and young trees; the grain crops appear; the breeding of birds, beasts, insects, &c.—indeed, nearly all the life of the year is born of spring. It is thus that poetry of the first rank always pictures its subjects briefly, and leaves the mind to form

clusions. Shakespeare abounds with such infinite thoughts, and such ideas has made Macaulay say that "the Allegro and Pousoroso are a collection of little hints from which the reader may furnish a poem for himself," meaning that much might be written in explanation of the primary ideas, but this explanatory writing would make it the thin diluted mixture, and no longer the close condensed essence. It will be seen, therefore, that my poetry will compare with the best that has ever been written in our own or any other language. This will refute the *Pictorial World*, which, without argument or example, states that the work is "a pamphlet with no poetic merit or skill." Those who understand poetry will see otherwise. But Machiavelli informs us that it is only minds of the first rank that understand a thing from itself. The second understand when it is explained to them, and the third never understand anything, either from itself or its explanation. This will account for the second class of poetry being so expository that it exhausts its subject, and never leaves the mind anything to expand or speculate upon. (Example.)

Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone.

Although day set on more than these there is nothing in the language to imply that, it is particular, and has no general bearing beyond what it names, and fails to embrace all that setting day requires. Example from mine—

"Mornug shines o'er hill and dale"

is general and means every hill and dale as far as morning shines. But as the succeeding lines qualify it to rural homely scenery the imagination would not likely stray out of our own country, perhaps not beyond the visible horizon wherein it would form a complete picture. It is to accuracy of this more essential and picturesque kind that true poets look instead of measure, which is no more to poetry than the ritual of Rome is to religion, a thing that deceives many but instructs nobody. But when a sentence at its smallest estimate grasps all within the visible horizon such comprehensive language suggests its details instead of expressing them, and saves the prolixious writing and tedious reading of those who write a whole poem about a daisy or a daffodil. Such a line, however, as

"Golden honeysuckle bloometh in each vale"

does not necessarily include the valley under Holburn Viaduct any more than the sixth commandment prohibits a soldier from pursuing his profession. Such phrases are general only as far as they have a legitimate bearing. Now those who wish to read the work for themselves can have it from Messrs. Ward & Co. for one shilling per copy, and I hope the above suggestions may be useful both to critics and readers.—Yours very respectfully,

JAMES MAXWELL.

9, Antrim Place, Belfast.

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